

MacIver appears at ERT: county seeks wind farm halt

Amaranth Mayor Don MacIver, speaking on behalf of his township council before a large gallery to the Environmental Review Tribunal (ERT) at Grace Tipling Hall Tuesday evening, made a strong health-related plea for Dufferin Wind Power's proposed 230kv transmission line to be buried throughout the distance across the township.

His wish list consisted essentially of only two items: that the line be buried in the interests of human, animal and environmental health the same extent as to Shelburne and the industries in southern Amaranth; and that there be an immediate baseline evaluation (of health effects) with annual monitoring for 40 years beyond the project termination.

In a recent interview, the mayor said he was surprised and disappointed that he would be alone among the municipalities speaking for a buried power line at the ERT. Shelburne council is known to be opposed to the power line traversing the town, even though it is to be buried.

In the meantime, county council, on a motion by Shelburne Mayor Ed Crewson and Amaranth Deputy Mayor Walter Kolodziechuk, is asking for termination of the Dufferin Wind Farm entirely, with compensation of all investors for their investment to date.

The county motion notes that the province had terminated two gas-fired generators at a cost in excess of \$500-million, is exporting electricity at a loss, and, it says, most wind energy in Ontario is surplus to base needs.

In his recent interview, Mayor MacIver said the information he'd received from experts in electricity and effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF) was scary.

Some of that information may have formed a basis for his statistical outline of EMF effects Tuesday.

His information on adverse effects on humans included greater incidences of leukemia, cancer, Alzheimer's and dementia on persons exposed to EMFs. On milk production, he said the EMFs had decreased milk production by 5.0% and reduced milk fat by 16.4% among Holstein cows.

He cited birth and breeding problems among pets. There is sufficient evidence to invoke the Precautionary Principle to ensure that no harm should come to any individual or animal living or travelling near high voltage power lines.

The mayor attributed some of his information to studies over the past 30 years including a UK one that found greater numbers of cardiovascular illnesses as well as lung cancer and aggravated asthma among 2.7 million people living within 400 metres of overhead high voltage lines.

Mayor MacIver was one of four presenters at an evening meeting of the ERT. Apparently, the evening meeting, which commenced at 6:30, didn't afford time for cross-examination.

By Wes Keller